



"TO CARE FOR HIM WHO HAS BORNE THE BATTLE, AND FOR HIS WIDOW AND ORPHANS."

ESTABLISHED 1877.—NEW SERIES.

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VOL. III.—NO. 48.—WHOLE NO. 152.

GEN. W. T. SHERMAN'S

Address on the Life and Services of
Gen. T. E. G. Ransom.

A TRUE PATRIOT'S SON.

A Volunteer of '61—His Rapid
Advancement.

WOUNDED FOUR TIMES.

Stricken Down by Disease—
His Last Words.

The following is the text of the eloquent address delivered by Gen. W. T. Sherman before Ransom Post, No. 131, St. Louis, Mo., of which he is a member, the evening of June 29:

COMRADES: When in November last I came from Washington to St. Louis to make this my final home, I was invited by several of the Posts of the Grand Army of the Republic to join them, but feeling that some of my neighbors intended to form a new Post more convenient to my residence, I concluded to unite with it. The name of this new Post had not yet been determined, and having on the walls of my private office a portrait or likeness of Brig.-Gen. T. E. G. Ransom, whose name was vacant in the roster of this Department, I suggested his name as an appropriate one, and offered to present the portrait to typify the man. The members adopted the name, and have since concluded to enlarge the portrait so as more conspicuously to display the features of him who is patron of this Post; and it is but right that I, who knew him in life and have thus been instrumental in perpetuating his name, should demonstrate the wisdom of our choice.

THE RANSOMS.

The Ransoms are a Vermont family. The ancestors were of that race called the "Green Mountain Boys," who were with Stark at Plattsburgh and with Montgomery at Quebec in the old French war of 1756, and in our Revolutionary war of 1776—a hardy, bold race of men, suited to the times in which they lived. The father of our namesake was Truman B. Ransom, born at Woodstock, Vt., in 1783. Left an orphan early in life, he had to struggle for the means of subsistence like most of the boys of that period. Yet, by industry and thrift, he managed to acquire a good education, and started forth to carve out his own career in the world. He first taught mathematics in a school at Middlebury, Conn.; then was employed to survey the Connecticut River, and afterwards was engaged as a teacher at a military school in New Jersey; again at Fayetteville, N. C., and at Washington, Ga.; at Pensacola, Fla., he was professor of mathematics in the United States Navy. He was afterwards employed as chief engineer on the public works of Illinois, and finally drifted back almost to the point whence he had started, —Norwich, Vt.—where he became the principal of Capt. Alden Partridge's Military School, then, since, an academy of great renown. This military school at one time almost rivaled the National Military Academy at West Point, and there many a man who afterwards became famous in the Mexican war and civil war first drank in the inspiration of patriotism and learned the lessons of the art of war, which enabled him, out of unorganized masses of men, to make companies, regiments, and brigades of soldiers, to act as a single body in the great game of war. I have been at Norwich, which is situated on the western bank of the beautiful Connecticut River, directly opposite the venerable University of Dartmouth, and believe that such picturesque surroundings make an impression on the mind which purifies and imbues it with an exalted love of nature and of one's country. It was here on Nov. 29, 1834, that our hero, Thomas Edwin Greenfield Ransom, was born, and it was here that he spent his boyhood. His father was at the time principal of the military school, and it was but natural that the child should catch the spirit of the father and reflect the genius of the place. The father was universally regarded as the best educated scholar in the military branches of knowledge in all New England, and if not in the United States. His neighbors and associates record of him that he was not only learned in books, but in form, bearing, and manner was a knightly gentleman and soldier.

THE MEXICAN WAR.

When in 1846 the Mexican war occurred, and the small Regular Army of that day was found insufficient to invade Mexico and conquer peace, the Congress of the United States decreed an increase of the Regular Army by 10 new regiments in addition to the volunteers who had offered their services. The 9th Regular was assigned to New England, and by universal consent Truman B. Ransom was pointed out as the best man to command it. He volunteered at once, and was appointed its lieutenant-colonel, the colonel being the Hon. Frank Pierce, of New Hampshire, a gentleman of great political prominence, who in March, 1847, was made brigadier-general, and became afterwards President of the United States. Ransom succeeded him in command; was commissioned colonel April 18, 1847, and on him devolved all the labor and details of organization and preparation. This regiment was assembled at Fort Adams, R. I.; was there completely equipped, and in due time embarked and sailed for Vera Cruz to join the army then under command of Gen. Scott. It participated in all the battles of that most romantic and captivating campaign from Puebla to the City of Mexico, but on Sept. 13, 1847, in the last assault on the Castle of Chapultepec, in sight of the city, Col. Ransom was killed at the head of his regiment in his 43d year of age. Of him Adj.-Gen. Drum, of the Regular Army, writes me from Washington, under recent date: "I was subaltern officer in Truman B. Ransom's regiment, the 9th Infantry, and was standing by his side when he fell at Chapultepec. He was by all odds the most brilliant man under fire I have ever seen." His body was sent to his beautiful home at Norwich, Vt., where on the 23d of February, 1848, it was buried with all the honors due a gallant soldier and much-beloved fellow-citizen, and there his body now remains.

GENERAL RANSOM'S CAREER.

Such was the father of our Gen. Ransom, who was at the time a mere lad of 14 years, hardly capable of appreciating the loss of such a father. The mother was living, but was overtaxed by the care and maintenance of a large family. Who will do justice to the privations, labor and distress of the poor women, who, deprived of their natural guardians, had to struggle with poverty to provide food, clothing and education for lusty lads thus left by a Government which took the lives of the fathers and stopped their pay before their bodies were fairly cold in death! But this poor, unselfish lady struggled on and gave to the Regular Army another son,—Dunbar,—and to us of the Army of the West her youngest and fairest and most beloved son Thomas, whose portrait we now see before us.

As soon as he reached manhood he left his beautiful New England home for the then far off Chicago, where he embarked in civil business, with varied fortune, till the grumbling and roaring of the coming storm awakened in him the early inspirations of his childhood. Hearing that his country was in danger, he waited for no draft or bounties, but enlisted on the 30th of April, 1861, in Co. E, 11th Ill. Inf., and was at once elected captain of his company. As soon as the companies of the regiment had assembled, on the 3d day of May of the same year, he was elected major, and went with his regiment to the capital of his State (Springfield) and on to Cairo and Bird's Point. Here on the 30th of July the three months for which the regiment had been enlisted expired, and it re-enlisted for three years; Ransom was elected lieutenant-colonel, and subsequently, on the 15th of Feb., 1862, when his colored W. H. L. Wallace, was made brigadier-general, he (Ransom) became the colonel of the 11th Ill. Inf. In November of the same year he was himself made a brigadier, and was brevetted a major-general in September, 1864.

In command of that gallant, heroic regiment, the 11th Ill., Ransom shared in every engagement with Gen. Grant about Cairo, at Forts Henry and Donelson, at Shiloh and Corinth, and as brigadier-general, he was with us at Oxford and Vicksburg. He was wounded in Southeast Missouri on the 19th of Aug., 1861, at Donelson, Feb. 16, 1862, and again at Shiloh April 6, 1862. To follow his personal history, I would have to reveal all the battles, marches and labors of the armies of the Union which resulted in the capture of Vicksburg and the opening of the Mississippi River to free navigation, which I regard as the most important and conclusive event of the whole civil war.

WHERE GEN. SHERMAN FIRST MET HIM.

It was during the siege of Vicksburg that I first noticed this young man, who commanded a brigade in McPherson's corps—the Seventeenth. His brigade was on the extreme right of that corps, which brought him in contact with the left of my own command—the Fifteenth Corps. His appearance was almost boyish, with blonde hair, blue eyes, a fair complexion, and a though of slender form, he had the bearing of a gallant soldier. War is the supreme test of manhood, and an hour—a minute sometimes—reveals the spirit which is in the man; the grasp of the hand, the flash of the eye, the unspoken word which trembles on the lips in the supreme moment of battle tell more than a volume can record. I saw Ransom during the assault of the 22d of May, 1863,—saw his brigade dash against those battlements to be hurled back because the time was not yet ripe,—and I then marked him as of the kind of whom heroes were made.

He lay on a rude improvised bunk, tried to be cheerful, and insisted that he was "all right," or would be in a day or so; but I noticed that his hand was dry and feverish, his forehead cold and clammy, and the pupils of his eyes distended, just as I had noticed in my own son, Willie, a few days before his death. Dr. Moore asked a few questions of his attendants, and gave some general directions when he left. Outside the cabin I asked the Doctor what he thought. He said little, but I read in his face that Ransom's time on earth was short. Time was then so important that the movements already ordered must go on; part of that army was ordered back to Chattanooga and Nashville, and part to Atlanta and Savannah. The Seventeenth Corps formed an essential quota of the latter column, and as Gen. Ransom could not mount his horse, he was carried towards Rome, the nearest point for a railroad, in a litter.

He was attended by his personal staff; the litter was carried by four men at a time, and these four were relieved every hour by a fresh set. This was on the 28th of October, 1864, and I started from Gaylesville for Rome the next day, and overtook the cortege on the road. The men had constructed a sort of canopy to screen his face from the sun, and as my party approached they set the litter down and examined Ransom. There was little change since our previous visit. He certainly had a perfect memory, and full consciousness of all that was passing. I remember to have joked him on traveling in a style of Oriental luxury in his regimental wagon, and to log along in the back of a horse. He smiled and made a pleasant reply, and we remounted and rode on.

His last words.

The next morning the party reached Rome, carrying the dead body of Gen. Ransom. They reported that he had died shortly after we had passed him in the afternoon of the 29th day of October, 1864. Observing fatal symptoms, his kind attendants carried him to a farm-house by the roadside, and there, lying on a bed, he said: "As a soldier I have tried to do my duty. I do not claim that all I have done was owing to patriotism alone, though I believe I have as much of that as most men. Patriotism and inclination have led me the same way to do all in my power for my country."

Yes, Ransom, though you had not reached your 30th birthday, you had done a man's full share of work on this earth. You might have reached your "three score years and ten" and have done no more. I wish you could have gone on with us to Savannah, to Goldsboro', and Washington city; still more, that you could have been with us at our many social meetings at Chicago, Cincinnati, and St. Louis, for which you were so brilliantly qualified; but I fear that you were otherwise engaged; that you, Dan McCook, Harker, McPherson, Joe Mower, and a host of other young and gallant fellows should go ahead to prepare the way for us who may lag behind; but when we do meet, the interval will seem as but a short day!

From Rome, Ga., we sent the body of Gen. Ransom to his home at Chicago, where it is now buried. The Society of the Army of the Tennessee, rich in noble intentions, but poor in purse, has decreed a monument, but I fear that no marble marks the spot where his body lies. For this I care not; better let the dust return to dust, and leave us who are living witnesses to testify, so that the young and rising generation may drink the inspiration of patriotism from the fountain of pure sacrifice of such a life as I have endeavored to portray.

WE CANNOT, WE SHOULD NOT FORGET.

The civil war—its alarms, toils, labors, battles and sacrifices are fast passing out of the memories of the living; it is to the interest of some that they should be buried in oblivion forever, and it may be wise that in public we should relegate the past to the province of history, but among ourselves we cannot, we should not forget. We know that in Republics the greatest danger comes from within and not from without, and we who felt the pelling of the pitiless storm, who endured the tribulations and anxieties of four long years of civil war, and saw perish at our sides thousands of bright, fair-haired boys like our hero of to-night, should so paint the hardships and cruelties of war, that others may not be tempted by selfish ambition, plausible pretense, and false issues to create a pretext for another; but when war comes there is only one way to win, and that is with the sword and the musket, just as Ransom did in 1861!

THE GRAND ARMY.

The Grand Army of the Republic proclaims as its fundamental creed, "Fraternity, Charity and Loyalty,"—mutes toward none, charity for all. We canonize no living man, but our dead heroes are the jewels in our imperial crown of glory, whose dazzling effulgence will kindle the spirit of patriotism in the hearts of the next generation. We admire courage, manliness and skill even if opposed to us, and to such of our former enemies as have shown by their deeds a willingness to embark with us on the great ocean of the future, we concede perfect equality, an ardent friendship, a welcome to our camp-fires, and a share in the charitable restraints established by Government for the discipline of the army; but we prefer our own heroes, of which we have an abundance, and the privilege of retaining a suspicion of those men who did not fight, but who were content to be in the rear, and to let others do the fighting and the dying. We are not to be deceived by the false promises of the next generation, and we are not to be deceived by the false promises of the next generation, and we are not to be deceived by the false promises of the next generation.

Of these I could name hundreds who fell under my own personal observation, but my office to-night is only to demonstrate that Gen. T. E. G. Ransom, whose name we bear and whose portrait is now exhibited before us, is a conspicuous example. In his own language, he began at the Memphis Railroad, in front of Fort Robnett. Moore's and Phifer's brigades made up the front line, while Cabell's brigade stood in reserve. Hebert's division extended northeast, with Green's Cavalry and McLean's brigades in front, and Colbert's in reserve.

BEGINNING OF THE BATTLE.

Gen. Rosecrans thought it best to begin the battle some distance from the town, beyond the line of the forts. By so doing he would develop the plans of Van Dorn. Gen. Davies' division, in the center, went out between the railroads, while McArthur's brigade went out on the southwest side of the Memphis road. The cavalry swinging out on the left flank, encountered Van Dorn's cavalry. Skirmishing began, Van Dorn's infantry following the cavalry, and forcing back the Union skirmishers.

IN FRONT OF DAVIES' POSITION.

In front of Davies' position was an old breastwork built by Beauregard. Gen. Davies sent Col. Oliver's brigade to take possession of it. It was half past ten when Lovell's division (Confederate) advanced and began the battle

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XXXII.

To the Boys and Girls of the United States:

You will remember that Gen. Bragg, in August, 1862, began his march northward to invade Kentucky; that he pushed on almost to Louisville; that Gen. Kirby Smith at the same time moved north from Knoxville, marching through central Kentucky nearly to Cincinnati, and that Gen. Buell had to make a rapid retreat across Tennessee and Kentucky to Louisville; and, finally, that Gen. Grant was left with a small army to hold western Tennessee. We must keep this in mind if we would understand the battle of Iuka, given in my last letter, and the battle of Corinth, which will be described in this.

You will remember that Gen. Sterling Price, after his defeat at Iuka, September 19, 1862, stole away at night, leaving all the wounded on the field of battle. Following him, we see his troops marching south on the Fulton road 10 miles, then turning west and marching to Ripley, 32 miles southwest of Corinth, joining Gen. Van Dorn.

VAN DORN'S PLAN.

Gen. Van Dorn saw that Corinth must be captured. It was only a railroad junction, but it was the key to all the surrounding country. If it could be captured, Gen. Grant would be compelled to abandon the whole of West Tennessee; so Van Dorn reasoned. He knew that Corinth had been fortified by the Confederate troops under Beauregard, and that Gen. Halleck, after the evacuation of Corinth by the Confederates, had built redoubts, but he had 38,000 troops while Gen. Rosecrans, who was in command at Corinth, had only about twenty thousand. He therefore determined to capture it.

THE CONFEDERATE SPY.

There was a Confederate spy in Corinth—a Miss Burton—who sent a letter to Van Dorn which fell into the hands of Gen. Rosecrans' detectives, who, when it was discovered, it was a copy, and then resented it and allowed it to go to Van Dorn. Miss Burton in her letter told Van Dorn how many Union regiments Rosecrans had, and also the number of cannon, and informed him that the town could be best attacked from the northwest, between the two railroads. Gen. Rosecrans did not have Miss Burton arrested; he was too shrewd for that. But the detectives had their eyes on her so sharply that she could not send a second letter to let Van Dorn know that the negroes and soldiers were building other redoubts and breastworks.

North and east of the town there are swamps with knolls and thick woods—not an easy place to deploy troops in line of battle. On the northwest, however, the ground is high and rolling, with no natural obstructions. It was over this plateau that Van Dorn intended to make his attack. The Memphis & Charleston Railroad comes into the town from the northwest, the Mobile & Ohio from the north, and the Tennessee from the south.

Walking out over the Memphis Railroad, the Fort Williams on the south side of the road. It is on a knoll, and the three 20-pounder Parrot guns inside of it sweep all the plateau. North of the railroad, on another knoll, is Fort Robnett, close by the county road leading to Bolivar. Walking northeast, and crossing the county road leading to Chevalle and the Mobile & Ohio Railroad, we come to the county road leading to Purdy, and beyond it we see Fort Powell. Beyond Fort Powell is Fort Richardson. These are all the points we need to keep in mind.

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crans out of West Tennessee.

HIS DISASTROUS ROUT.

The Battle of the Hatchie and
Its Results.

By "Carleton."

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XXXII.

To the Boys and Girls of the United States:

You will remember that Gen. Bragg, in August, 1862, began his march northward to invade Kentucky; that he pushed on almost to Louisville; that Gen. Kirby Smith at the same time moved north from Knoxville, marching through central Kentucky nearly to Cincinnati, and that Gen. Buell had to make a rapid retreat across Tennessee and Kentucky to Louisville; and, finally, that Gen. Grant was left with a small army to hold western Tennessee. We must keep this in mind if we would understand the battle of Iuka, given in my last letter, and the battle of Corinth, which will be described in this.

You will remember that Gen. Sterling Price, after his defeat at Iuka, September 19, 1862, stole away at night, leaving all the wounded on the field of battle. Following him, we see his troops marching south on the Fulton road 10 miles, then turning west and marching to Ripley, 32 miles southwest of Corinth, joining Gen. Van Dorn.

VAN DORN'S PLAN.

Gen. Van Dorn saw that Corinth must be captured. It was only a railroad junction, but it was the key to all the surrounding country. If it could be captured, Gen. Grant would be